best, but with manifest effort, to keep pace to the frenzied music of an orchestra paid to keep frenzied. A half dozen of the ladies pounced upon Monte as he sat alone, and he gladly turned over to them the wine he purchased as the price of admission.

Yvonne, she with the languid Egyptian eyes, tried to rouse the big American. Was it that he was bored? Possibly it was that, Monte admitted. Then another bottle of wine was the proper thing. So he ordered another bottle, and to the toast Yvonne proposed, raised his glass. But the wine did him no good, and the music did him no good, and Yvonne did him no good. The place had gone flat. Whatever he needed, it was nothing L'Abbaye had to offer.

COVINGTON went out into the night again, and, though the music from a dozen other cafés called to him to come in and forget, he continued down the hill to the boulevard, deaf to the gay entreaties of the whole city. It was clear that he was out of tune with Paris.

As he came into the Place de L'Opéra he ran into the crowd pouring from the big gray opera house, an eager, voluble crowd that jostled him about as if he were an intruder. They had been warmed by fine music and stirred by the great passions of this mimic world, so that the women clung more tightly to the arms of their escorts.

Impatiently he started again for his hotel. This confoundedly good-natured, self-satisfied crowd moving in couples irritated him. At that moment a tall, slender girl turned, hesitated, then started toward him. He did not recognize her at first, but the mere fact that she came toward him—that any one came toward him—quickened his pulse. It brought him back instantly from the shadowy realm of specters to the good old solid earth. It was he, Covington, who was standing there.

Then she raised her eyes—dark eyes deep as trout pools; steady, confident, but rather sad eyes. They appeared to be puzzled by the eagerness with which he stepped forward and grasped her hand.

"Marjory!" he exclaimed. "I didn't know you were in Paris!"

She smiled—a smile that extended no further than the corners of her perfect mouth.

"That's to excuse yourself for not looking me up, Monte?"

She had a full, clear voice. It was good to hear a voice he could recognize.

"No," he answered frankly. "That's honest. I thought you were somewhere in Brittany. But are you bound anywhere in particular?"

"Only home."

"Still living on the Boulevard St. Germaine?"

She nodded.

"Number forty-three?"

He was glad he was able to remember that number.

"Number sixty-four," she corrected.

They had been moving toward the Metro station, and here she paused.

"I may accompany you home, may I not?" he asked eagerly.

"If you wish."

Once again she raised her eyes with that expression of puzzled interest. This was not like Monte. Of course he would accompany her home, but that he should seem really to take pleasure in the prospect—that was novel.

"Let me call a taxi," he said. "I'm never sure where these French undergrounds are going to land me."

"They are much quicker," she suggested.

"There is no hurry," he answered.

With twenty-four hours a day on his hands, he was never in a hurry.

Instead of giving to the driver the number sixty-four Boulevard St. Germaine, he ordered him to forty-seven Rue St. Michel, which is the Café d'Harcourt.

It had suddenly occurred to Monte what the trouble was with him. He was lonesome.

Marjory was surprised when the car stopped before the café, and mildly interested.

"Do you mind?" he asked.

"No, Monte."

She followed him through the smoke and chatter to one of the little dining-rooms in the rear where the smoke and chatter were somewhat subdued. There Henri removed their wraps with a look of frank approval. It was rather an elaborate dinner that Monte ordered, because he remembered for the first time that he had not yet dined this evening. It was also a dinner of which he felt Edhart would thoroughly approve, and that always was a satisfaction.

"Now," he said to the girl, as soon as Henri had left, "tell me about yourself."

"You knew about Aunt Kitty?" she asked.

"No," he replied hesitatingly, with an uneasy feeling that it was one of those things he should know about.

"She was taken ill here in Paris in February, and died shortly after we reached New York," she explained.

What Covington would have honestly liked to do was to congratulate her. Stripping the situation of all sentimentalism, the naked truth remained that she had for ten years given up her life utterly to her aunt—had almost sold herself into

"'I suppose I'm too selfish—too utterly and completely selfish.'"

slavery. Ostensibly this Aunt Kitty had taken the girl to educate, although she had never forgiven her sister for having married Stockton; had never forgiven her for having had this child, which had cost her life; had never forgiven Stockton for losing in business her sister's share of the Dolliver fortune.

POOR old Stockton—he had done his best, and the failure killed him. It was Chic Warren who had told Covington the pitiful little tale. Chic always spoke of the aunt as "the Vamp," the abbreviation, as he explained, being solely out of respect to her gray hairs. Marjory had received her education, to be sure; but she had paid for it in the only coin she had—the best of her young self from seventeen to twenty-seven. The only concession the aunt had ever made was to allow her niece to study art in Paris this last year.

"I haven't heard from Chic since Christmas," he explained; "so I didn't know. Then you are back here in Paris—alone?"

Unconsciously he had emphasized that word "alone."

"Why not?" she asked directly.

She held her head a bit high, as if in challenge.

"Nothing; only—"

HE did not finish. He could not very well tell her that she was too confoundedly good-looking to be alone in Paris. Yet that was what he thought, in spite of his belief that, of all the women he had ever met, she was the best able to be alone anywhere. There were times when he had sat beside her, not feeling sure he was in the same room with her: it was as if he were looking at her through plate-glass. To-night, however, it was not like that. She looked like a younger sister of herself.

"Still painting?" he inquired.

"As much as they will let me."

"They?"

She leaned forward with a frown, folding her arms upon the table.

"What is the matter with men?" she demanded. "Why won't they believe a woman when she tells the truth?"

He was somewhat startled by the question, and by her earnestness.

"Just what do you mean?"

"Why can't they leave a woman alone?"

It was clear he was not expected to answer, and so, with her permission, he lighted a cigarette and waited with considerable interest for her to go on.

"To-night," she said, "I ran away from Teddy Hamilton, for all the world like a heroine of melodrama. Do you know Teddy?"

"Yes," he answered slowly, "I do."

He refrained with difficulty from voicing his opinion of the man, which he could have put into three words—"the little beast." But how did it happen that she, of all women, had been thrown into contact with this pale-faced Don Juan of the New York music-halls and Paris cafés?

"I lent Marie, my maid, one of my new hats and a heavy veil," she went on. "She came out and stepped into a taxi, with instructions to keep driving in a circle of a mile. Teddy followed in another machine. And"—she paused to look up and smile—"for all I know, he may still be following her round and round. I came on to the opera."

"Kind of tough on Marie," he commented, with his blue eyes reflecting a hearty relish of the situation.

"Marie will undoubtedly enjoy a nap," she said. "As for Teddy—well, he is generally out of funds, so I hope he may get into difficulties with the driver."

"He won't," declared Monte. "He'll probably end by borrowing a *pour-boire* of the driver."

She nodded.

"That is possible. He is very clever."

"The fact that he is still out of jail—" began Monte.

Then he checked himself. He was not a man to talk about other men—even about one so little of a man as Teddy Hamilton.

"Tell me what you know of him?" she requested.

"I'd rather not," he answered.

"Is he as bad as that?" she queried thoughtfully. "But what I don't understand is why—why, then, he can sing like a white-robed choir-boy."

Monte looked serious.

"I've heard him," he admitted. "But it was generally after he had been sipping absinthe rather heavily. His specialty is 'The Rosary.'"

"And the barcarole from the 'Contes d'Hoffmann.'"

"And little Spanish serenades," he added.

"But if he's all bad inside?"

She raised those deep, dark eyes as a child might. She had been for ten years like one in a convent.

Covington shook his head.

"I can't explain it," he said. "Perhaps, in a way, it's because of that—because of the contrast. But I've heard him do it. I've heard him make a room full of those girls on Montmartre stop their dancing and gulp hard. But where—"

"Did I meet him?" she finished. "It was on the boat coming over this last time. You see—I'm talking a great deal about myself."

"Please go on."

He had forgotten that her face was so young. The lines of her features were scarcely more than sketched in, though that much had been done with a sure hand. Whatever was to come, he thought, must be added. There would be need of few erasures. Up to a certain point it was the face of any of those young women of gentle breeding he met when at home—the inheritance of the best of many generations.

"Please go on," he repeated, as she still hesitated.

"I met Teddy on the boat," she resumed. "I was traveling alone because—well, just because I wanted to be alone. You know, Aunt Kitty was very good to me, but I'd been with her every minute for more than ten years, and so I wanted to be by myself a little while. Right after she died, I went down to the farm—her farm in Connecticut—and thought I could be alone there. But—she left me a great deal of money, Monte."

SOMEHOW, she could speak of such a thing to him.

"It was a great deal too much," she went on. "I didn't mind myself, because I could forget about it; but other people—they made me feel like a rabbit running before the hounds. Some one put the will in the papers, and people I'd never heard of began to write to me—dozens of them. Then men with all sorts of